

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KUALA 00569 231017Z
ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1877

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, CH, MY

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER RITHAUDDEEN'S VISIT TO CHINA

REF: A) 77 PEKING 2786 (NOTAL), B) PEKING 0155 (NOTAL)

1. MFA UNDERSECRETARY RAZALI ISMAIL TOLD EMBOFF AND VISITING AMCONSUL HONG KONG DPO LEVIN JAN 20. THAT FOREIGN MINISTER TENGKU RITHAUDDEEN WILL VISIT THE PRC "SOMETIME IN THE SPRING". STRESSING THAT THE VISIT IS STILL CONFIDENTIAL, RAZALI SAID THAT A FINAL DATE HAS NOT YET BEEN SET.

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2. RAZALI SAID THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT IS PART OF A GOM CAMPAIGN TO UPGRADE THE RATE OF EX-CHANGES WITH THE PRC. HE SAID THAT WHEN THEN DEPUTY FINANCE MINISTER RICHARD HO VISITED CHINA LAST SUMMER, THE PRC "MADE IT KNOWN" TO HIM THAT THEY WERE UNHAPPY WITH THE SLOW PACE OF DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND THE PRC. RAZALI

SAID THAT THERE WOULD BE OTHER ELEMENTS TO THIS CAMPAIGN, BUT HE DID NOT ELABORATE.

3. ACCORDING TO RAZALI, THE GOM HAS CAREFULLY LIMITED EXCHANGES WITH THE PRC WHILE WAITING TO SEE HOW THE CHINESE WOULD BEHAVE AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. HE SAID THAT ON THE WHOLE THE BEHAVIOR OF PRC EMBASSY PERSONNEL HAS BEEN ABOVE BOARD, MUCH BETTER, FOR EXAMPLE THAN THE EMBASSY STAFF OF THE "OTHER SOURCE OF WORLD-WIDE COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY." RAZALI ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF MALAYA'S VOICE OF THE MALAYAN REVOLUTION (VMR) STILL BROADCASTS FROM CHINA AND HE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS THE NEW CHINA NEWS AGENCY HAS BEGUN TO REPLAY VMR BROADCASTS PROCLAIMING "BATTLEFIELD VICTORIES" IN MALAYSIA, ACTIVITY THAT HAD HALTED WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS IN 1974. HOWEVER HE SAID THAT THIS LEVEL OF PRC PROPAGANDA SUPPORT FOR THE CPM IS TOLERABLE TO THE GOM, AND HE ATTRIBUTED THE STEPPED-UP NCNA CAMPAIGN TO INTERNAL STRUGGLES WITHIN THE PRC HIERARCHY.

4. COMMENT. RITHAUDDEEN'S FORTHCOMING VISIT TO CHINA MAY WELL BE PART OF A GOM REACTION TO PRC COMPLAINTS OF NEGLECT; LAST YEAR SAW FEWER EX-
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CHANGES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES THAN ANY YEAR SINCE 1974. ALSO, HOWEVER, IT IS WIDELY PREDICTED THAT GENERAL ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD THIS YEAR, PERHAPS AS EARLY AS APRIL, AND HEAVY NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF A MALAYSIAN MINISTERIAL DELEGATION IN PEKING JUST BEFORE THE ELECTION WILL PRESUMABLY BENEFIT THE GOVERNMENT IN PREDOMINANTLY CHINESE CONSTITUENCIES IN THE SAME WAY AS POSTER-PHOTOS OF CHAIRMAN MAO AND FORMER PM RAZAK DID IN THE 1974 ELECTION.

MILLER

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